

## WORDS

- **altarpiece** = a painting or sculpture behind an altar
- **arch** = something with a curved top and straight sides
- **balanced** = here: the right amount of everything
- **canvas** = the cloth on which you paint
- **ceiling** = the top wall of a room
- **century** = a hundred years
- **contrast** = difference
- **cover** = to have something all over
- **create** = make
- **decoration** = nice and beautiful objects that you paint on something to make it more attractive
- **design** = plan, create
- **express** = show
- **fountain** = a structure from which water is pumped into the air
- **huge** = very big
- **interior** = the inner part of
- **main** = most important
- **marble** = a hard rock that becomes smooth when you polish it; it is used to make buildings and statues
- **movement** = here: to make something dynamic, with a lot of life
- **orderly** = arranged, in order, logical
- **period** = time
- **prime** = most important
- **Renaissance** = Europe between the 14th and 17th centuries; a time in which art, literature and philosophy became very important
- **replace** = to make instead of something else
- **representative** = a typical painter of this period
- **ruler** = a person who governs a country
- **sculpture** = an object made out of stone, wood or another material by an artist
- **setting** = location
- **shape** = form
- **work** = piece

The baroque was a style of art that existed from the late 1500s to the middle of the 18th **century**. The **works** of art were rich, dramatic and had a lot of detail. Baroque was a **contrast** to the **Renaissance**, which dominated much of European life in the **period** before. Renaissance art was **orderly** and **balanced**. It often used geometric figures and shapes. Baroque artists and architects concentrated on curves and **arches**.

Many European **rulers** wanted to show how powerful they were during the baroque period. They paid architects to build palaces with great gardens in baroque style. Versailles near Paris and the Belvedere in Vienna are examples for such architecture.

Baroque buildings were not the same in all of Europe. In Austria, Spain and Latin America the inside of these buildings were **covered** with many **decorations**. Baroque architecture of France was more classical and orderly. In England, Sir Christopher Wren was the **prime** architect of the period. He rebuilt London's St. Paul's Cathedral after it had been burned down by a fire in 1666 and **replaced** the old Gothic with a newer baroque style.

Baroque **sculpture** was characterized by **movement**. The most famous **representative** was Giovanni Bernini of Italy. He **created marble** sculptures, **designed fountains** and made **altarpieces**. He also played an important role in rebuilding St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. In the 1650s he designed the great square, or piazza, in front of the Catholic world's most important cathedral.

Baroque paintings were famous for their large forms. Italian artists painted the **ceilings** of churches with massive colourful figures. Michelangelo Caravaggio was thought to be the first great painter of the baroque era. We worked mainly in Rome, where he painted scenes of the New Testament on large **canvases**. He chose biblical stories and put them into modern **settings**.

In Flanders, present-day Belgium, Peter Paul Rubens was the **main** baroque artist. He painted majestic scenes of Christ's birth, as well as altarpieces and other religious objects. All of them were **huge** and **expressed** dynamic movement. In Holland, Rembrandt was the great painter of the era. He painted portraits of individuals, groups and sometimes himself.

Jan Vermeer specialized in painting the **interior** of rooms of middle class houses.

In Spain, Velazquez created scenes of everyday life, as well as portraits of the Spanish royal family and other historical figures.



*Palace of Versailles near Paris*